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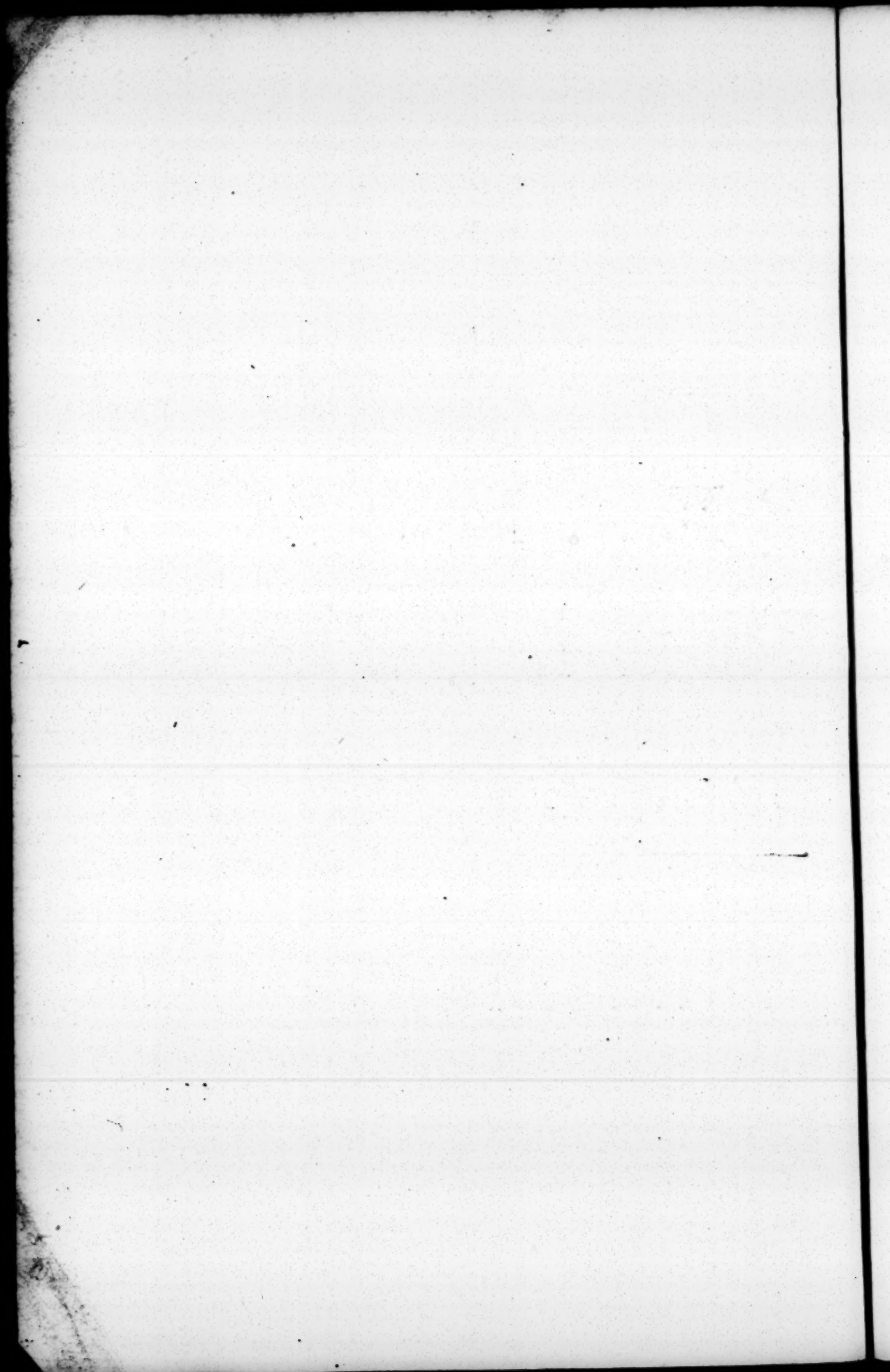
S H E W I N G T H A T

C H R I S T

I S E V E R Y

B E L I E V E R ' s L I F E.

[Price F O U R - P E N C E .]



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S H E W I N G T H A T
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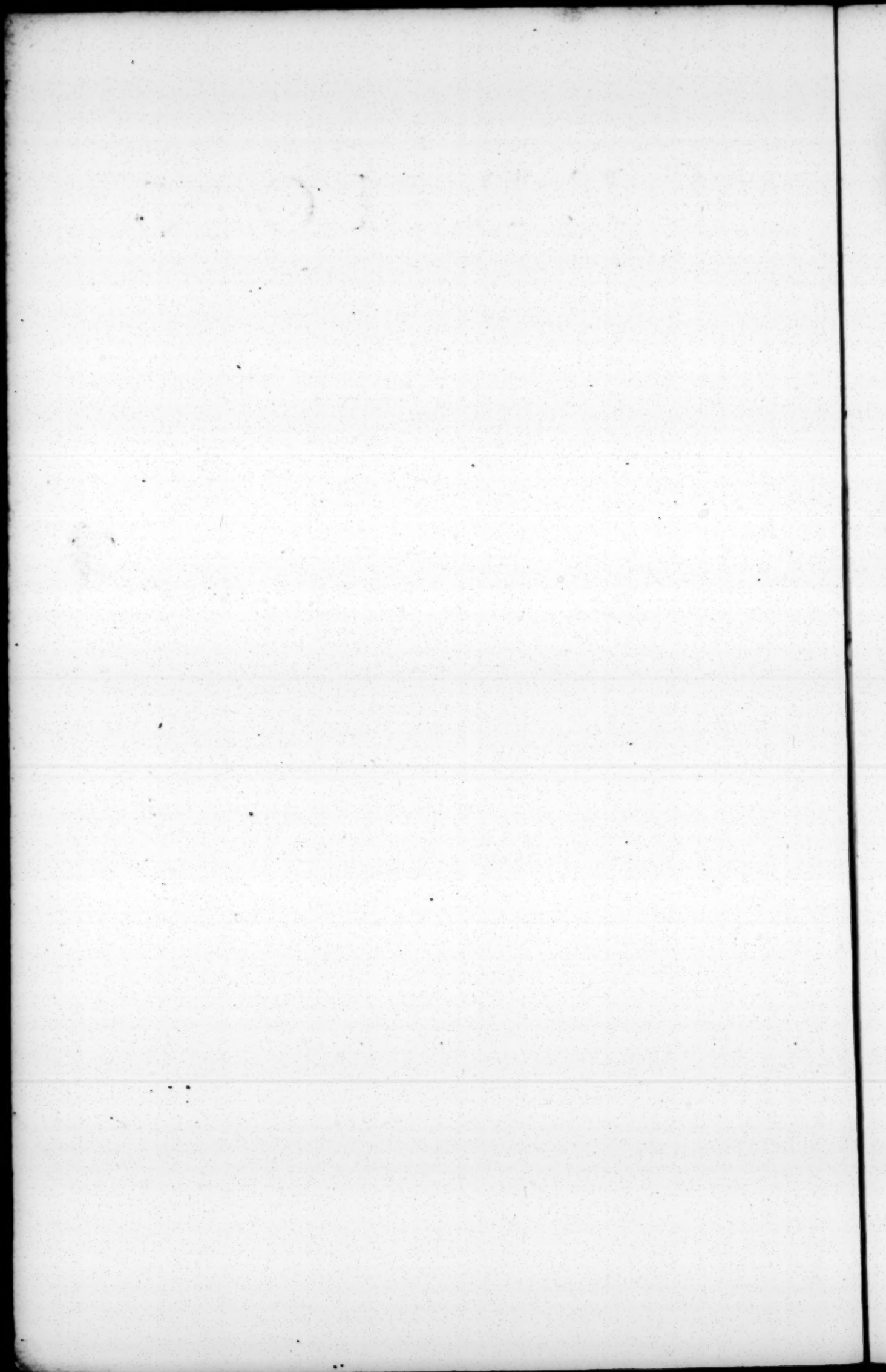
G A L A T. i i i. V E R S E 20.
*For ye are dead, and your Life is hid with
Christ in God.*

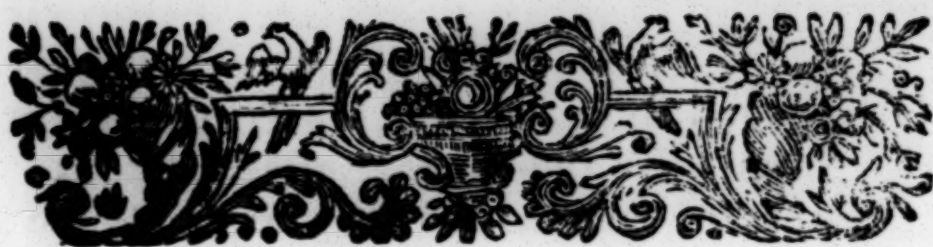
G A L A T. i i. V E R S E 20.
*I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live:
Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: And the
Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by
the Faith of the Son of God, who lov'd me, and
gave himself for me.*

By R O G E R B A L L,
Minister of the G O S P E L.

L O N D O N:
Printed for the A U T H O R; and Sold by none
but H I M.

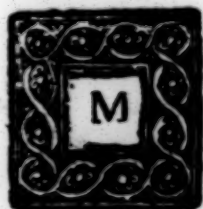
M.DCC.XLI.





Phil. I. 21,

*For me to live is Christ, and to die
is Gain.*



Y Brethren: True Christians always have found that the Gospel has its Opposition either from without or within; the Apostle when he wrote this Epistle, was in Bonds for the Gospel of his Lord and Saviour Christ, and his great Care is, that the *Philippians* might not be offended at it. And in order to remove this Stumbling Block out of their Ways, he assures them, *ver. 12.* that whatever befell him was for the Furtherance of the Gospel: In the 13 and 14 Verses, he gives two Instances for what he said, the one was, that his Bonds for Christ were manifest in all the Palace, which was *Nero's*; for by his, that is, *Paul's* Sufferings, many in *Nero's* Court came to be inquisitive for to know what this Gospel should be and mean, that *Paul* could suffer so undauntedly for it, and by inquiring into it, were convinced of its Worth and Value.

The Second Instance was, that many of the Brethren were the more confident by his Bonds; that is, they were the more emboldened to speak and preach the Word of the Lord, because they saw, how God carried *Paul* thro' all his Sufferings. It has pleased the God of all Wisdom, that the Gospel should always thrive best when 'tis most trampled on; in this respect 'tis like Trees, as Naturalists say, the more they are blown by the stormy Winds, the faster it roots; or are like the Fire, the more the Wind blows it, the more it kindles its Flames, burns the hotter, and shines the clearer: If you dam the Stream, the Waters will rise higher. The all-wise Being has weighty Reasons for what he suffers to be in his Church Militant; 'tis for the Exercise of the Faithful therein, both of Pastors, that is, Ministers, and People, that they may be the more studious and vigilant in their several Places. If *Arius* and *Sabathius* had not vexed the Church of God; the one with the Heresy of the Denial of the Trinity, that is, *Arius* denied Christ to be equal with God, and *Sabathius*, a Jew that lived in the Fourth Century, who held there is but one Nature in Christ, contrary to the Answer of the twenty-first Question of the Assembly's Catechism, which says, two distinct Natures and one Person; for I say, if
these

these deep Things had never been discuss'd, 'tis ever to be thought they would not have been so manifestly cleared and acutely determined as they are at this Day, if Disputes had not arose: If Episcopalians and Presbyterians, Independants and Baptists had not differed, Truth had never been so sufficiently ajusted and confirmed as it is. By this time I hope you see the Advantage God makes when Truth is upon Trial by the Sufferings of his People, and Christ is Gain both in Life and Death: *For me, says Paul in my Text, to Live is Christ, and to Die is Gain.* The original Word here is in the old Translation rendered thus: *Christ is to me both in Life and Death Advantage:* Others again make two Propositions of it thus, *Christ is to me Life, and Death is my Gain:* In fine, the total Sum is this, whether I live or die I shall gain; if I live I shall gain more Knowledge of his Ways and more Communion with him therein; and the same Christ that is my Life here, will be my Gain at Death; therefore it is as if he had said, take no Thought about me, for I shall do well, whatever befalls me; if I lose my best Friends and Comfort here, I shall find all in that Christ for whom I suffer hereafter, and so Death will be my Gain.

From the Words, as I judge, the Doctrine
 B 2 that

that offers clearly is this: That *Christ is every Believer's Life.*

I think I need not explain the Word Life to ye, every Body knows it to be opposed to Death; and whatever is excellent in its kind, is set forth by Life: This Point of Logic the Devil in all Likelihood is better acquainted with than we are, and therefore he would keep us always in the Confines of Death, that is, he would have Death struck upon all our comfortable Enjoyments, see *Job II. 4, 5. Skin for Skin, and all that a Man has, will he give for his Life,* saith Satan to God, *but put forth thy Hand and touch him,* that is, strike Death upon his Enjoyments, *and he will curse thee to thy Face.* The Truth is, the Comforts of this World are dead till Christ shines in them. I said I need not explain the Word Life to ye, but I am, as it were, drawn into it, and shall be a little more copious than I thought to have been, because from he that is joined to the Living there is Hope. *Life is an excellent Thing,* says the Wise Man, *a living Dog is better than a dead Lyon;* what is the great Care of People about but Life, why have they so many earnest Thoughts and such hard laborious Toils, both of Mind and Body, but to provide for their Life, when Sickneses, Diseases, or any other Danger siezes

us, or our near Friends and dear Relations: What is the main Care of all but Life? oh, the Life of my Friend, my Child, my Wife, my Husband, will be gone! and when Death has taken away the Life that is desirable, the Sorrow and Grief that follows thereupon plainly demonstrates, that Life is an excellent Thing. You know, my Brethren, Life puts a quickning Principle into them that have it, hence Christ is said to give Life to the World, *John vi. 33* and the Bread that he gives is living Bread, and the Words that he speaks are Spirit and Life, and we should labour for this Meat, which endureth to Life everlasting. See *ver. 27. Such as are Believers are passed from Death to Life.*

But more particularly to the Point of Doctrine before us.

First, Christ is the Life of Righteousness to every believing Soul, and that by his active and passive Obedience, that Righteousness which Christ brought in by his Blood: The Sum Total of all reigns in every believing Soul. That, and that alone has the Pre-eminence: All is Dross and Dung in Comparison of that; and this is discover'd by the Spirit of Christ, *John 16, 8*, 'tis he that dis-

covers and causeth the Soul to close with this Righteousness, and overcomes the Heart to rest thereon for Life: This is a Truth that will stand the Test in Opposition to all its Adversaries, Banter and Redicule: Of its being a lazy lolling on Christ for Acceptance with God, every true, virtuous, and pious Soul will acknowledge, that there is a Principle in them to seek after Life in the wrong Way: I mean, a Man would have it in, and from himself; and it is no less than Omnipotence itself, that brings a Man off this rotten, sandy Foundation, and cause the Soul to rest upon Christ alone: Moral Swasion, tho' ever so nervous and penetrating, will not do it. Let me add, Opportunities and Means of Grace will not effect it neither: None but Christ, who is a quickening Spirit, can effect it; and this he does by the Use of Means as the formal Cause.

And this is that which makes God's People come to Ordinances and bless God for them, because that Life is convey'd to their Souls by, and thro' them. Hence it is they become embolden'd in the Means of Grace, and are not asham'd of the Gosple of Christ, because 'tis the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believe; therein is the Righteousness

ousness of God reveal'd from Faith to Faith;
as it is written, *The Just shall live by Faith.*
Rom. 1. 16. 17.

Secondly, As the Life of Righteousness is from Christ, so is the Life of Holiness too: All their (that is Believers) holy Actings and gracious Dispositions, and shining Virtues in their Hearts and Lives are all from Christ; they have no other Foundation. Of his Fullness have we all receiv'd, and Grace for Grace; that is Abundance of Grace. If there be the least Breathings of Life in the Heart, 'tis all from Christ; there is no Man lives the Life of Holiness till he hears the Voice of the Son of God: 'Tis true, there may be the Out-sides of Grace, but no living Performances, 'till Christ is a Principle of Life in the Soul. I dare appeal to any Man, or Woman, that will be so ingenuous to confess, that till Christ became the Life of Holiness to them, they never could experimentally say, that such an Ordinance was in an especial Manner blest to them, and then another at another Time.

My Brethren let me tell ye, tho' ye know it, Opportunities and Means of Grace where the Life of Holiness is, are other Things, and better to you than they are to others.

You can say, oh! the sweet Communion I had with God upon such a Sabbath, in such an Ordinance, and at such a Sermon; you had such Meetings and Incomes from Christ, your Life upon your Spirits, and such Drawings of your Hearts with the Bands of a Man towards God, that you would not but have been there for a World.

I came, says Christ, that ye might have Life, and that ye might have it more abundantly; that we might be ready in his Strength to every good Word and Work: Thus you see this was the End of Christ's Coming, that we might have the Life of Holiness.

Thirdly, Christ is the Life of Communion, he is the Life of all that converse, which we have one with another, when we are sociating ourselves together: This is that, that made *David* say, *A Day in thy Courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.* PSALM 84. 10.

From this Life we are fitted for a living Discourse together, for the having some heart-warming Conferences with each other; tho' but two or three meet together, 'tis to be hop'd they do not part without some spiritual, good, and mutual Edification of one another's Souls,

Souls, that are found in the Exercise of this Duty. The Life of Communion will stir up our Hearts to heavenly Mindedness, and helping one another forward in the Ways of God. There is a certain spiritual Fire and Heat Christians carry about them, so that when they company together they will warm and glow. Did not our Hearts burn within us, is sometimes their Language: They will, as it were, sparkle with gracious Discourses, when they experimentally feel what they profess to believe, *viz.* the Communion of Saints; and speak good Things from a Principle within. The Communion of Saints is a Sort of Exercise that the heavenly Inhabitants are imploy'd in that are above: And they here below, if once their Discourse together be of Grace in the Life thereof, oh! how it exhilarates their Spirits: This is that that makes those that have receiv'd the heavenly Tincture, delight in hearing, reading, praying, conferring, and so forth; because they find Life convey'd to their Souls thereby. 'Tis true, God's People complain of the Deadness of their Hearts, and what great Need they have of quickening Influences from on high: This speaks that your Souls are alive, and wants Liveliness: This is that I judge to be a discriminating, a discerning Mark between a Hypocrite and a Believer. I grant ye a Hypocrite

crite may out-talk a Believer with his acquired Parts; but he never can memick a Believer in the Life Part: Here he (that is the Hypocrit) differs from a Believer, as painted Fire differs from real: I judge you are acquainted with the Scripture that says, he that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son hath not Life: Let me add, let his Pretence be what they will.

Fourthly, as Christ is the Life of Communion, so he is the Life of Consolation to every virtuous good Man or Woman; the Jaylor, *Acts* xvi. 34. rejoiced that he with all his Household believed in God; so the Original by some is translated, Christ is the Life of our Comforts: 'Tis he that puts Consolation in our present and future Hopes, the Comforts that he gives are living Comforts; *my Peace give I unto you, not as the World giveth, give I unto you*; that is momentary and flattering, even from Man that is the highest Comforts it produces; for what would this World be, but a Chaos of the greatest, the uncomfortablest Confusion, if there was not a sociating with one another as Men; and here let me tell ye, Man, ay, and even good Men, that you have had great Hopes in, that they would be mighty Friends for you in your Distress; and may be not
only

only barely hoped, but have had very large Promises that Way too; from which you have counted before your Distress comes, that you certainly should have such a Friend, and in the depth of Distress he has failed you, and have been to you and your Circumstances as useless as a dead, rotten Man in his Grave: Hence *Micah's Advice is not to put trust in a Friend*, see *Micah vii. 5.* but Christ gives Peace in a different Manner; that no Man nor Devil can take it away, my Spirit shall be in you, an everlasting and even living Principle of Consolation which shall not be taken away from you; the cleansing, cooling, refreshing, cordial Water, that Christ gives, is a Well of living Water, springing up into everlasting Life: So you have it from the unerring Mouth of Truth itself, *John iv. 14.* I know the Adversaries to the final Perseverance of the Saints would enervate this Place, as indeed they would all other of the like Nature; by the crouding in of their Sense, which is, that whereas the Water we drink to quench our natural Thirst, will neither abide long in us, nor long quench our Thirst. This Holy Spirit will abide for ever with them that do not by their Sins expel him; all which seems to me to be meer Shuffle, for the Text seems plainly to hold forth that the Spirit shall not be express'd by that worst of Filth

Filth and Mud, Sin; for let us keep a little to the Metaphor of a Spring, the Nature of which is to purge out, purify, and cleanse itself of what even Filth is put therein: The Truth of which any one may prove by an occular Demonstration. In fine, what can this hold forth plainer; and be the more literal Sense, then the Flow of Graces on the Soul by Christ, the Life of consolatory Refreshment; which they that believe on him, shall find to accompany them till they are possessed with everlasting Life. This is the plain Sense, to which all hard and obstruce ones ought to give Way, as is the allowed Maxim of all that would be thought fair. Now the unerring Mouth of Truth, he that never speaks Falshood says, the Water that I shall give you, shall be in you as a living Principle of Consolation; and shall not be taken away: By this Time I hope it appears plain, that Christ is the Life of all a Christian's Comforts: Sure I am, he is the Life of Friends; the Life of all Refreshments that a Christian have, and all are dead till Christ shines in through them.

Fifthly, Christ is the Life of Glory, and this we must Talk of at a Distance; *for Eye bath not seen nor Ear heard, nor bath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive what God have*

have laid up for them that love him. If. lxiv. 4. compared with I. of Cor. the 2. 9.

There is an inconceivable Scene of Glory laid, which is the utmost of all we can be possessed with; and Christ has purchased it for us by his Blood, and hath made our Way and Title for us plain; which create in us a Holy Boldness, to enter into the Holiest, even to the Bosom of the Father: He it is that has removed all Blocks and Hinderances out of the Way to Glory; that raises up, and helps over all Rubs that are to be met with in the Way: He bore down all Opposition when he travelled in the Greatness of his Strength, and set Heaven's Doors open for the Elect: He removed the Cherubims that keep the Way, and opened his Breast to the flaming Sword of Justice, that kept the Tree of Life from us; and after all, he made his Entrance into Glory for us, and has taken Possession of many Mansions of Glory for Mankind to be possessed of. Here, you and I, my Brethren, should stand and admire, that such Cost and Pains, such Care and Love, such rich Provisions for Glory, should be bestowed on Mankind, and not on Angels; that they should be passed by with a Purpose never to recover them, they might have been redeemed, and we left to perish: That fallen
spair,

Angels should be left in the Darknes of Despair, who stood nearer to Christ by their Creation than we did; and yet we underhope, and they under the black Horrors of Despair: My Brethren, God have an Election amongst us, but not among Devils; the Door of Mercy is shut against them, never to be opened, but stand wide for you and I. Let your Circumstances and Conditions be what they will, you read in the Scriptures of some of the worst of Men, that Christ is Life of Glory too: I mean they were so before Christ was their Life, they were Thieves, Drunkards, Whoremongers, Idolaters, Persecutors, and Blasphemers; yea, Crucifiers of the Lord of Glory. My Brethren, when God shall have gathered all his Elect together, what an innumerable Company there will be, that were such Sinners as you and I could never have thought them to have been: This should raise Matter of Admiration, that such notorious Sinners on Earth should after all prove glorious Saints in Heaven. To Christ the Life of Glory will be brought, whom all the Elect of God, they shall be fitted and fetched, one after another, into the Kingdom of Grace and Glory. It is the Will of God concerning the Chosen in his eternal Purpose and Love, that they should be made holy in this World, and happy in that which is to come; where
there

there will be a separating between the Precious and the Vile, between the Tares and the Wheat, the Sheep and the Goats; he will set the Sheep, the Children of God, on his right Hand by themselves; and the Goats, the Children of Hell and Darkness, by themselves: That they shall never come near one another more.

I shall conclude with the Apostle's Words to the Col. c. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4 vers. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those Things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right Hand of God; set your Affections on Things above, not on Things on the Earth, for ye are Dead and your Life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in Glory.*

Here let us fix our Design, securely cast the Anchor of our Hope, believing that he will be the Life of Glory to us in the World to come.

F I N I S.